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English H 1, Period 2  
October 23, 2024

## The Head Of The Game

*Jack and Jill went up the hill*

*To find some peace and quiet*

*But Jack fell down and broke his crown*

*While Jill went walking past him*

*Down the hill and turning again*

*Jill laughed and laughed at the look on Jack's head*

*Jack then died while sad and alone*

*Maybe Jill intended for him to fall on his dome*

Jill...

Jill...

Ji...

J...

WAKE UP!

Theodore wake up!

Theodore awoke from his dead sleep. Sweat soaked through the sheets, huffing on the thick foggy haze that had always surrounded his town. Bad dream. Again, for the third time this week, horrible twisted dreams. Theodore was shaken, the images of a children's rhyme distorted into something vile. But what disturbed him more was that it was Jack and Jill. His favorite, and hers. But no time to fret, the sun was making its trip over the horizon, beckoning all townspeople out of their slumber. Slipping through the shadows of his home, Theodore is quiet to not disturb Eleanor. The little angel always slept in. Theodore, still rattled over his rude awakening, walked into the kitchen. Mother was still asleep, no breakfast was served for him like there always was before. Ever since Father passed, Mother hadn't cooked breakfast. It seemed to Theodore that

she had forgotten he now had to work on the farm dawn to dusk most days. He thought it right to give her a piece of his mind, but decided against it every morning. He knew of his mother's sadness, and Eleanor's lonesome. He needn't add to it all with his internal wailings over breakfast.

The moon had passed and the sun came to show its face. What a dreadful day it would be for Hecate. Already irritated by the sun's beams flowing like rivers through her stained glass window. Soon. Soon was the blood moon, and soon she would have her ceremony. The ceremony every sixteen year old girl had in the coven. The only way to gain true power, through the strength of the blood moon, and a blood sacrifice. *How original* Hecate would think every time an elder would mention it.

"Get up Hecate! You are no cat, enough sleeping. There's much to prepare for today."

"Hello to you as well Mother." Her mother's warm welcome didn't exactly make Hecate any happier.

"You must get dressed my dear. The blood moon is in five days' time. There is so much preparation that goes into these ceremonies. And you must prepare yourself, as now you'll be a woman."

Hecate couldn't help but roll her eyes at her mother's theatrics.

"I'm serious Hecate, you'll soon be a very powerful witch. And you will need much training to keep it under control. But nonetheless, this is your awakening, your rebirth if you will. You must take all I say to heart. And listen." Her mother glared at her as she said the words *And listen*. As Hecate has never been one to follow much of the coven rules.

"Yes of course. Whatever you say Mother, but please get out. I must dress, remember?"

She dresses, reluctantly eats the breakfast her mother prepared, and she was off. Hecate hated the confinement of her cabin in the woods. And the hustle and bustle of the coven members frantic assembly of the coming holiday. She was able to slip through the shadows of the still dimly lit wood, in hopes of finding sanctuary alone with Medusa. Medusa was a slippery little thing. A mischievous snake who happened to become Hecate's closest companion. But not to Hecate's surprise, she was interrupted.

*Bloody Hell*

“Good morning MAL.” Frustrated with the creeping of her peers.

“Good morning Hecate! How ever did you see us?” The three of them utter simultaneously. Which for some odd reason always seemed to unnerve Hecate.

Morticia, Anastasia, and Lilith. Triplets they were. And most inseparable. Hecate had grown up with the three of them, sisters they were called. Everyone part of the coven was your sister. But Hecate found them rather annoying. Sweet? Sure, but annoying. Especially lately, as they’ve been following Hecate around, now that her ceremony is fast approaching.

“You three aren’t invisible. Nor are you fog that’s able to slip past me. Go back to the village, I want to be alone.”

“But your ceremony is being set up, don’t you want to overlook the preparations?” Again, always talking in sync, which only infuriated Hecate more.

“No! I wish to have no part in that at the moment. When I return, I will overlook everything. But as for this dreadful morning, I want to be alone with Medusa. Now the three of you shoo, before I summon your mother. She wouldn’t be pleased with the three of you if she knew you were wandering around the woods instead of studying.”

Finally the creatures went away. And Hecate spotted her friend as the snake stalked a poor, unsuspecting mouse. Hecate loved to watch her eat, the thrill of the hunt, and the satisfaction after the kill. It all excited Hecate very much, and soon she would know the true feeling of it.

After her walk, Hecate felt refreshed. And she finally stalked her way back to the village to see how things were coming along. Everyone was bustling around, scattered throughout the village making plans and setting up. It looked beautiful, she had to admit. Rows upon rows of blackened roses were spread throughout the plot of land. Skulls from past sacrifices were delicately placed on tables and in the trees. The colors of crimson and midnight were all around. Hecate was unsure of this whole celebration at first, but seeing it now come altogether, she knew it would be alright.

After many hours of what Hecate considered helping, and what all the others considered lecurring like they were incompetent children, Hecate set off to make her own plans. She needed a sacrifice, and in her mind, she might as well make the most of it. Make it special. So she had decided who her victim would be. It was unfortunate of course, and it made Hecate the slightest bit nauseous, but it had to be done. Theodore. Her lovely innocent Theodore. The boy who has been in love with her from the day they met. Now Hecate never paid him much mind, as he was a foolish human boy who missed the love from his dead father. But eventually, against her will,

Hecate grew to anticipate the boy's company. It made her feel powerful, knowing the boy was so desperate for her. And she didn't think him bad company either. But the coven, nor Hecate cared much for feelings. She knew he would make the best offering, and her family would be proud.

She knew the job wouldn't be an easy one. Which was why she had already started. She was using what Theodore had expressed to her, and what she saw as his weaknesses, against him. The tragic death of his father, the lack of attention, the mind numbing fascination with things for children. To Theodore, telling these things to Hecate was a relief. He saw her as his mentor, and his greatest love. Hecate saw this as a gateway, a key to his mind and soul. And she planned to take the most advantage of it as possible. She learned that he fancied childrens nursery rhymes. Jack and Jill apparently his favorite, and the more she thought about it, the more she agreed. A story about an unsuspecting boy who pathetically gets killed by the girl he loves. Hecate found it ironic, and rather funny.

It was a brilliant plan, she thought. Torture his mind, throw him off. Then, on the day of the blood moon, trick him into thinking her family cursed him. Manipulating him into truly believing she would save him. Then, at just the perfect moment, watch his face in horror as he realized it was she who was the threat. As everyone knows, it's always the ones closest to you, who stab you in the back. Yes, it was an evil mischievous thing to do. And yes, it brought the slightest amount of peril to her heart, but she knew it would be worth it. She had always possessed great and dangerous power, but now? Now she would be undefeatable, and Hecate thought that was worth more than a hundred lifetimes of love.

“Hello my love!”

“Hello Theodore.” *Sound happier Hecate*

“I didn't expect you today, but I'm glad you came.” He picked up her hand, and placed an ever so gentle kiss.

“Of course Theodore. Walk with me, I'm sure there is much you want to tell me.” *There always is*

“Oh yes. I have missed you plenty. So has Eleanor, it seems like you're her only friend.”

“Well I'm sure I'll be able to pay a visit soon.” *That sticky little child is insufferable*

“And I've been having the most queer dreams you could imagine. They're more nightmares actually. Like just last night, I dreamt of Jack and Jill, but a very disturbing version. I was Jack, and I went up the hill with Jill, come to think of it, I never did see her face. But anyways, we got

up and I felt someone push me, and I went tumbling down. I broke my head, but Jill didn't come to aid me. Instead, she walked off past me, laughing. I saw her silhouette looking back at me. And I heard this laugh, a gruesome, devilish laugh. When I woke up, I was scared to bits." He giggled slightly at his last comment.

"However peculiar. Such an odd dream, Jack and Jill. You're favorite as well." Hecate made the conscious effort not to smirk at her fine job.

"Most certainly. But I have nothing to fear, now that you're here with me." He smiled, so cluelessly, it almost made Hecate feel pity.

"Yes, nothing can harm you now my dear." *Hahahahaha, if only you knew, idiot boy.*

As the two walked, Theodore spoke more of his family, his chores on the farm, and the townspeople who were frightened indefinitely of the people in the woods. Hecate smiled and nodded, as she always did. Throwing her own bits of tales to seem engaged and interested. But really, Hecate didn't care much of what Theodore said. Mostly she found her aura disturbed in his presence, and maybe a miniscule speck of comfort when he didn't bore her with his trivial human affairs.

Narrowly escaping, Hecate finally escaped Theodore's grasp without having to see his pest of a little sister. She knew what she had to do, and she anticipated every moment. Deep inside she still felt what people might describe as dread, but she knew that once it was all said and done, she wouldn't regret a thing.

Two nights and a day passed. Hecate upped the ante on Theodore's brain scrambling. Coming up with elaborate night terrors and awful gut feelings she knew was sure to get him.

"Hecate, there are three days until your ceremony. You have been preparing for the sacrifice, yes?"

"Yes mother, you are going to be delighted once you see what I have planned. It is alright for us to have more than one sacrifice right Mother?"

"Sisters have done it, yes. But most find it difficult with one my dear. Are you sure you want your first time to be so...chaotic?"

"Oh don't worry about me Mother. It's all part of my plan, just you wait and see. Now, I must finish playing with my little victim."

It was show time. Hecate's ceremony was the next day. In order to execute her plan, she had to start today.

"Theodore! Theodore, something terrible has happened, I'm so sorry. I tried to protect you!" *Cry Hecate, sound scared.*

"My dear, what are you on about? What has happened?"

"It's them! My family, it is them that has been torturing you. They found out about you, they are angry. They want to hurt me by hurting you." *Breathe heavy, sound scared.*

"Are you saying it's them who have been plaguing my mind at night?"

"Yes, yes it's them. We must go, I have to get you away from here. That is the only way, we need to go to the woods on the other side of town. I have to make sure my family doesn't come near you."

"Hecate I can't. My family is here, Eleanor. I have to protect her, and my mother now."

"Don't worry about them. It is not them my family wants. They won't waste their time with them. It is you who is in danger. My love you must listen to me, I will keep you safe. But you have to trust me." *Keep eye contact Hecate, mean it.*

"Alright. I will go with you, but I must say goodbye to my sister and mother. There is much I have to do before we leave."

"NO! No Theodore, we must leave immediately. You will see them again, I promise you this. I will protect them like I will protect you. You will see them soon my love, but we must hurry before my family catches on to us."

"Okay, then we go. I trust you more than anyone else in the world my dear."

*Got him. How easy it was, hahahaha.*

So they go. Hecate lures him to the woods opposite of her home. And they run. They run and run, Hecate begging him not to stop. Weaving through branches, ducking hanging vines, tripping over tentacle like roots of massive trees. Their lungs burn with the feeling of the unnaturally thick and queasy mists from the surrounding moat like ponds. Sharp leaves and twigs scratch and cut them, but there is no time to stop.

*Now's the time Hecate. Do it.*

She falls. Hecate screams, there's blood flowing from her head. Or so it seems. Theodore runs back to get her, but there's no time. He can't stop running.

“Go! Go on, Theodore they are coming, they now know we have run from them. You mustn't wait for me. I will be right behind you, my love go, please.” *Good, make him run.*

“No, I will not leave you. You are hurt, there must be a way to-”

“There isn't! Just go, I promise I'll find you. I'm the only one who can fight them off. You must run, now go!”

Hecate's eyes glew a menacing red. Something Theodore had never witnessed before. And it frightened him. He looked into the blood red eyes of his love, now understanding that he must go on without her. She will be fine, she is strong. He must go so he can save himself and his family. Theodore kisses her forehead, turns, and runs.

*Yes dear boy. Run, run from me. Hahaha*

Hecate, without a worry in the world, gets up. She stares into the figure of Theodore, watching it grow smaller as he runs farther away. This is it. It's showtime. With all the fear and pain she could muster, she screams. “THEODORE!”

But before he can turn around, he's hit. A hot white flash crashes to his head. Then there's nothing. No pain, no happiness, just pure black darkness.

“Had a rough tumble there, huh Jack?”

Theodore's head was pounding. He could feel his pulse through his body, thumping to an unnerved rhythm. His eyes barely open, the sounds around him fuzzy, like something clogged his ears. But through his little vision and hearing, he knew who was speaking to him. It couldn't be.

“Hecate? What happened? Where the bloody hell are we?”

“Home. We are home. And we are celebrating.”

Theodore's eyes opened fully now. He went to move toward her, but something stopped him. Something heavy, and loud and it clanked on the floor. Chains. He was chained. How and why,

he did not know. He was lost in all his confusion. Last he could recall back to, he was running. From what though, he couldn't say.

"Hecate, what is this? Why am I chained, what happened?"

"It'll all come back my dear. You'll remember. You know, it is a shame. I didn't expect our last meeting to be this way. But you are my one way ticket to power. So one must sacrifice even the most splendid of things for what they really want."

As Hecate goes on about power and sacrifice, Theodore remembers. He remembers Hecate saying her family was coming after him. How they ran into the woods, not stopping for anything. How Hecate fell and bled, but he kept on. He finally remembered the hot pain hitting the back of his skull, and then black. Slowly, putting the pieces together like a terrible, awful puzzle, he realized.

"It was you." He looked at her with such sadness and disgust.

"Of course it was. Did you honestly believe I actually worried that my family was coming for you? Even if they were, it wouldn't have mattered to me." Hecate had the most evil look one could manage. And this. This was not a front, or for show. This was the realest she had ever felt. She finally understood Medusa and the greatness of a hunt.

"Oh don't look at me like that. I'm not the fool here. But enough of that, I have many plans for you before you die tonight."

Theodore's eyes only widened more. This couldn't be happening. This had to be another one of those sick dreams he's been having.

"Yes, about those. That was me as well. You really aren't that hard to torment." She laughed and laughed, as though it was the funniest thing on earth.

Before Theodore could get in another word, he was being dragged. It seemed to him like he had been in an underground fortress of sorts. And now he was being hauled to another place. He began to flail as he realized he wasn't being moved by people, but by nothing at all. He didn't understand how this was happening. But as quickly as it started, it had ended. Somehow shadows had surrounded him again.

*Thick. Thick liquid. Can't breathe* These were his first thoughts when he regained consciousness. He was being suffocated. But not by a rag, or pillow, or even a hand. By liquid. Think hot liquid. He thrashed and shook, trying to breathe. But all that was being accomplished was him ingesting

this substance. He thought he was going to die. He couldn't breathe, couldn't move. There was nothing he could do to stop it. Then it did stop. He took in the best breath he could muster, and he was never more grateful for the taste of air.

“Waterboarding. A torture method used by people like you. People who hunt witches. Ironic isn't it? Well I'd guess you would consider this blood boarding, but same idea, yes.”

Theodore coughed and gasped, only slightly comprehending what Hecate had to say. Something about hunting witches, and blood. Blood! He was being drowned by blood, the metallic taste finally hitting him. He gagged and choked, vomiting. Well, tried to. Theodore was tied to what seemed like a long table, unable to move. So he then sputtered on his own vomit, which didn't help the terrible sickness he felt.

“You know what's more ironic about this whole situation? You'd be devastated to learn where I obtained this blood.”

Theodore finally was able to spit out most of the vileness in his mouth. He began to think about what she meant. Where she obtained the blood, he had not the slightest idea. This was all too much. The thought of the girl he loved doing such things to him flooded his mind like how the blood had filed through his lungs. He suddenly got a feeling, the most dreadful feeling. He knew he was right, as much as it didn't make sense. He just knew.

“You're right. Mommy dearest and your sweet little angel were so kind as to donate to my cause. Why don't you look?” Her pleasure in this only grew.

The table he laid on lifting, so now it stood vertical. And there they were. They were dead. Throats splayed open, blood completely drained. Theodore didn't have it in him to scream. He just stared, his chest tightening with the most pain. Even worse than his fathers death. Silent tears streaming from his eyes. He couldn't move, nor make a sound. He just saw his life become crashing down. There was nothing, he felt nothing. Yet he felt everything. Such an odd feeling that he felt, and completely indescribable.

“I told you you'd see them again.”

In swift motions, he was laid back down. And again the blood came. It showed no mercy, and didn't stop. No amount of twisting, turning, drowning would make it stop. And all the while, he heard crowds of laughter. There were so many women laughing. He hadn't noticed anyone there with them before. And eventually again, the blood stopped.

“Why are you doing this to me? Hecate what has happened to you?”

“Nothing Theodore. This is who I am. The girl you thought you knew never existed. This is me. And this is you, helpless, and alone. And just moments away from death.”

“Is that was you're going to do? Kill me like you did my mother and sister.”

“Absolutely. But not just like I killed them . I’m going to kill you like we killed your father.”  
*Hahahaha, yes. How we ripped him to shreds for what he did.*

“My father? What does he have to do with this?”

“Why, he's one of the reasons I picked you. You see, your father held an occupation that very few knew about. He was keen on ridding the world of witches. And he was successful most of the time. But he was no match for my coven. It was no animal attack. It was us. He stumbled across the wrong witch. And he killed her. He killed one of my sisters. And so, we hunted him down, tormented his mind. And when the time came, sliced him from head to toe, giving him to Satan himself.”

Again, Theodore's world seemed to shift, and everything he once knew was obliterated. His father a witch hunter? Hecate and her family taking his life? It all spun around his mind, and yet it knew she was telling the truth. And he realized this as some revenge plan for what his father did.

“Not necessarily Theodore. We got our revenge when your fathers soul was damned to Hell. You had always been a good candidate for my ceremony, it would have happened either way. Let's just say your father sealed your fate the day he took my sister's life. Well enough if story time, I plan to have fun with you before I end your suffering.”

More rivers of blood were shoved down his throat. He was beaten, poked and prodded. Whips, chains, hands, nails, anything within reach was used. It must have been hours of this, only pain and suffering. Death knocked on the door, but Hecate always kept Theodore from welcoming him to come in. He screamed, fought, and cried. He begged and pleaded for his life, for the life of his family, which he knew was futile. But this did not stop him.

Ribbons of crimson stained all around him. His body weak and tired. Movement was no longer an option, as the bruises and broken bones made it impossible. Theodore stopped fighting, He just wished for it to end. He thought of all the happy memories he could think of. Distracting himself from his morbid reality. He found an escape, solace in what he once had. But then, that was taken from him too. Hecate grew tired and sore from the torture and needed a moments rest. But she figured Theodore didn't. So she sat and watched as she warped every good thought Theodore would surface. And this, she thought, hurt him more than any physical ideology she

could come up with. She took away the one thing that brought him his last bits of hope. Of rest, and comfort.

Her coven cheered her on. Her mother never prouder. They saw Hecate would be a great and powerful witch, and the most according leader. So many plans for Hecate they had. She was their saving grace, she was what the coven had missed for a long while. Hecate's sisters, MAL, adored her. The triplets looked in awe of what strength Hecate had. And now they wouldn't be able to wait for their own ceremonies. But the moon was rising and the time was coming. Any minute Hecate would cast her sacrifice to the blood moon, and to her father Satan. And he would grant his most proud daughter the gifts of power and fear. And nothing appealed to Hecate more than that.

“It is time my sisters! Gather around, for my ceremony has officially begun.”

The women slipped through around the stage that Hecate and Theodore were perched on. Hecate then grabbed an old, desiccated skull, slit Theodore's wrist and drained a good amount into the cup. This chalice was then passed through the crowd, sipped on by every sister in the coven. Theodore could barely turn his head to look at what was before him. And he didn't care to. Everything had been taken from him. There wasn't anything to live for, so why try to stay alive? There was no way of escaping, and Theodore was almost pleased at this thought. He wanted it to end. He wanted to be with his mother and father. And his sweet angel of a sister, Eleanor. Yes, he wanted to see Eleanor. So finally, he crept towards the door the grim reaper had been pleading with him to open for what seemed like an eternity.

“The blood moon is above us, and our one true father is with us! This boy shall be sacrificed to him for my unending power. The blood moon gives me courage, and our father gives me strength. I will use my given power for any duty required by our Father and of my coven. For my sisters, Hail Satan!”

HAIL SATAN!

Hecate grabbed an old silver dagger, one made long ago by a great ancestor. She walked up to Theodore's head.

“Thank you for your sacrifice. It will not go unnoticed. Goodbye my dear Theodore.” *It's alright Hecate. Do it.*

Theodore looked one last time at his love, now with glowing red eyes. A beautiful girl, with such life. All memories of her flashed through his head one final time. Every walk, every dream, every kiss. It all didn't matter now, but it gave him one last sense of comfort before the world for

him would end. And Hecate could see this. Her last shred of innocence was given to him in the form of their last kiss. Hecate pulled away, Theodore blinked one more time.

Off with his head.